

WHAT I CLAIM IS:

1. A structural element, comprising:
at least one layer of composite material,
curable resin within said layer,
a decorated layer, and
a barrier layer between said decorated layer and said at least one layer of composite material,
said barrier layer comprising an optically light pigment.
2. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said at least one layer comprises an optically dark material.
3. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said optically light pigment is provided on a side of the barrier layer facing the composite material.
4. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said barrier layer comprises a layer of woven polyester material.
5. The structural element of claim 3, wherein said optically light pigment comprises a white pigment.

6. The structural element of claim 3, wherein said barrier layer comprises a layer of non-woven polyester material.
7. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said barrier layer comprises a metallic material.
8. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said at least one layer comprises a stack of layers of composite material and curable resin within which said layers are disposed.
9. The structural element of claim 1, wherein said stack of layers comprises layers having different structural properties, and said barrier layer comprises a layer of woven polyester material.
10. The structural element of claim 3, wherein said optically light pigment comprises a white pigment.
11. The structural element of claim 3, wherein said barrier layer comprises a layer of non-woven polyester material.
12. The structural element of claim 3, wherein said barrier layer comprises a metallic material.

13. A decorative structural element, comprising:

an optically dark laminate material including at least one layer of composite material,

an optically light pigment material supported by said laminate material,
and

a decorative image on said laminate material.

14. The decorative structural element of claim 13, wherein said optically dark laminate material includes a reinforcing material, and said optically light pigment material comprises another layer supported by said laminate material,

15. The decorative element of claim 14, wherein said pigment material comprises a coating.

16. The decorative element of claim 14, wherein said pigment material comprises a film.

17. The decorative element of claim 14, wherein said pigment material comprises polyester material.

18. The decorative element of claim 17, wherein said polyester material comprises a layer of woven fabric.

19. The decorative element of claim 17, wherein said polyester material comprises a layer of non-woven fabric.
20. A process for building a structural element, comprising:
providing at least one layer of composite material,
disposing a barrier layer atop said at least one layer,
providing a decoration atop said barrier layer,
applying a curable resin about said layers, and
curing said resin so that said layers bond together to form an integral structural element.
21. The process of claim 20, wherein said barrier layer comprises an optically light pigment.
22. The process of claim 20, and further including a step of shaping said layers prior to curing said resin, wherein said structural element can be formed with a predetermined shape.
23. The process of claim 20, wherein said at least one layer comprises a stack of layers of composite material, each of said layers of composite material having its own set of structural properties,